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Annotated Bibliography

Apfelbaum, D. (2001). Jewish Cusine. Ethnology, 40(2), 165.

The Kosher way of life is quite intense and not as simply as it may seem. “The basic underlying rules are fairly simple. If you buy your meat at a kosher butcher and buy only kosher certified products at the market, the only thing you need to think about is the separation of meat and dairy.” Being a student at school you truly have no control over what kind of meats they buy and how that meat is being prepared. It is easier for a student to pack their own lunches because it eliminates all of the confusion of if this is allowed for consumption. “Utensils that have come into contact with meat may not be used with dairy, and vice versa. Utensils that have come into contact with non-kosher food may not be used with kosher food. This applies only where the contact occurred while the food was hot.”

As a parent you cannot expect public schools to obey these rules when they have a thousand or more mouths to feed. Following those rules is extremely time consuming and hard to believe this is expected by parents. Majority of the kosher eating students that I was interacted with bring their own lunches and they seem perfectly fine with it. Bringing your own lunch seems like the only solution to the kosher problem. If a school’s lunch system was to be kosher that would be more money that they do not have.

Brener, N. D., Jones, S. E., Kann, L., & McManus, T. (2003). Variation in School Health Policies and Programs by Demographic Characteristics of US Schools. Journal of School Health, 80(12), 599-613.

There is not a greater awareness of peoples customs, religious rituals, and religious restrictions. “With many religions having dietary restrictions, public schools and their administrators are increasingly challenged to address questions involving a growing number of students with varying nutritional needs and dietary restrictions. Little guidance on this complicated issue exists in the courts or within school organizations.” Reasonable options are being weighed out to try to accommodate to students religious needs. Public schools try to be flexible and accommodating menus but the awareness has to be known first. If necessary the parent must notify the school of foods that they would like to be eliminated for religious reasons. The menus for the most part are non-pork products and do not offer beef products every day. Schools cannot guarantee that children will not have food that they should not be eating and every student cannot be accounted for.

In situations like these schools have so many students and it seems like everybody has a problem. It is really the parent’s responsibility to educate their children in their dietary restrictions because the school is not going to be feeding the children their job is to provide lunch for the kids and that is what they do. If a child gets in line and eats a lunch that they should not be consuming, a parent cannot blame the school because they cannot obey the needs of every single child; nobody will be happy.

Burks, M. (2014, June 3). Muslim San Diego Residents Call For Halal School Lunches | KPBS. Retrieved from <http://www.kpbs.org/news/2014/jun/03/muslim-residents-call-halal-lunches-san-diego-scho/>

When a food tour goes to a high school in San Diego with the intentions to show them how to make a good lunch; they are approached by Muslim mothers and daughters prepared to show them how to cook. These halal mothers and daughters have been battling with their district so they can offer halal options during lunch. One mother shares her concern “"I want to see a change in the schools; I want to see my son (offered) a different style of food than what I saw.” When she was in high school she explained that she didn’t eat because there was nothing for her to eat therefore she went throughout her whole school day hungry which affected her school work. A high school student shared her point of view on the situation stating “I feel like the free and reduced lunch is a waste, because you're providing me with resources to get lunch because of my low income but, at the same time, you're not providing me with the lunch that I'm supposed to be eating." A sociologist from San Diego University who studies health disparities related to acculturation spoke up for the Muslim community. She explained how not providing them with the proper meals at lunch is considered a push back because the school should be providing students with meals that gives them the energy to get through the day. With the Muslim children they go to school and starve themselves because they cannot eat any of the cafeteria food or they will snack up on junk food such as potato chips which really isn’t the point if there is lunch.

In a community where the majority is a certain race or religion there should be special accommodations if necessary. If there are a lot of Muslims in the school district and their children cannot eat lunch because of their religion then something should be done. If there isn’t then the district really isn’t at fault because every students needs cannot be accommodated for. I feel sympathy for the Muslim students who cannot eat lunch but can’t afford to pack their own lunches either. That situation is really something that should be looked into and handled and if more than one family is having these problems then something should be done because even nobody is at fault it is the right things to do.

Med-Ethics. (2013, February 25). Haredim Say They Can't Meet School Lunch Nutritional Guidelines For Religious Reasons - FailedMessiah.com. Retrieved from <http://failedmessiah.typepad.com/failed_messiahcom/2013/02/haredim-say-they-cant-meet-school-lunch-nutritional-guidelines-for-religious-reasons-234.html>

“Haredim say they need exemptions for religious reasons – or they need more money from the federal government to comply with the existing law” says Med- Ethics. Haredim like most religious are very strict about what they are consuming. They are having a hard time follows the regulations of the Healthy Hunger Free Kids Act of 2010. From the new set of nutritional guidelines which include the amount of grain consumption to making sure every student has at least half a cup of dark-green and red-orange vegetables per meal. Their religious rules interfere these new guidelines. Haredim say Grace after their meals but with that they have bread to consume after their Grace which is the amount of total grain consumption total. The USDA fortunately made a compromise that Haredim can eat their meals after bread after their meals aslong as the total meal doesn’t meet the maximum calorie content allowed by the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act. Another issue that Haredims had the USDA is the mandatory vegetable consumption per meals. The problem was that little bugs invisible to the naked eye or appearing as extremely tiny dots about the size of the head of a pin being on the vegetables and being a threat their health according to Israel’s Sefardi Chief Rabbi Shlomo Amar. They proposed to hire a kosher specialist to examine the vegetable but that would cost too much money so that idea was shut down. Haredims ordered a nutritionist to help organize meal plans that weren’t meeting the guidelines of the Hunger Free Kids Act and the Haredim nutritional restrictions.

Haredims being able to find a way to work around the USDA’s guidelines are impressive because they stood up for their religion and found a way to be true to themselves while obeying the law. The USDA was also very understanding for compromising for the sake of their religion. It isn’t right for the Haredims to take the governments money for school lunches and pocket them for other uses just because it is hard to meet the guidelines. I respect the fact that the students are allowed to go home for lunch because they are not feeling pressured to eat something that would be making them disobey their religion.

Twiner, A., Cook, G., & Gillen, J. (2009). Overlooked issues of religious identity in the school dinners debate. Cambridge Journal of Education, 39(4), 473-488.

Roman Catholics do not have much dietary restrictions. They do not really have conflict with the school lunches. As a Roman Catholic there are rules that you are expected to abide by at a certain age. At the age of fourteen you are expected to abstain from eating meat on Fridays in honor of the Passion of Jesus on Good Friday until the day you die. “Meat is considered to be the flesh and organs of mammals and fowl. Also forbidden are soups or gravies made from them.” It is not as hard for a Catholic to eat during lunch time because the only days that really matter are Fridays. Every Friday it will eventually start to accumulate but there are always options of without meat. “Salt and freshwater species of fish, amphibians, reptiles and shellfish are permitted, as are animal derived products such as margarine and gelatin which do not have any meat taste.”

I was born into the Roman Catholic religion so all my life I understand first hand of what these rules are like and honestly they are not bad. Not being allowed to eat meats of any kind of Fridays is ok. There is always an option of a salad or even a sandwich and packing a lunch has always been an option. Some schools will even accommodate with the religious dietary restrictions and prepare fish for lunch on Good Friday. Roman Catholic is not a hard religion to abide by, it is actually pretty simply.